

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING

August 11, 2009

First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

MINUTES

Members Present: Wm Levine, Ruth Hazzard, Pat Wagner, Jaime Tidlund, Sally Fitz, Touria Eaton, Pauline Lannon

Non-Members Present: Richard Roznoy (Planning Board), Jen Smith

The meeting began with a discussion about the minutes from previous meetings, we have not been receiving copies from the town to review at the meeting and members are not remembering to print them and bring them. In an effort to help remind members Jaime will send the minutes around via email the day before the meeting reminding people to bring them. During the September meeting we will need to review and approve the minutes from May, June, July and August.

Agenda for tonight's meeting:

1. Farm Festival
2. Farming on town land and some concerns

Sally is working on the brochure for the farm festival, she had a "sample" of what she was thinking, the commission agreed that what she had was good, we just need the concrete information. Jaime indicated she would finalize the farm tours this week and Sally would get the "information" on the farms in terms of what they would be offering for the tours. Sally also mentioned a meeting she had at the Amherst Schools superintendents office on the 21st to discuss the possibility of getting some sort of card or flyer to kids about the event. The Ag-Com is shooting for September 1st; to have any literature sent to the printer so we could begin distributing it by 9/8 or so. Jaime is going to contact Harpo on Wednesday to get an update on his progress with items he has been working on. Sally is going to have some students at her camp work on the art for the flyer and posters.

There was also discussion about where to distribute flyers before the Oct. 3rd event, some ideas were Atkins, Amherst Farmers Supply, Small Ones Farm Cows, the elementary schools, Chamber of commerce, as well as ACTV and the Town Web Site.

Next there was a discussion about farming on town conservation land with concerns from growers about the lack of leases to insure that they will be able to use the land for extended periods of time as well as the lack of marketing opportunities on town land. Growers would like to work with the town to be able to sell from a farm stands on public land. The town has lots of prime farmland but no definite yes's for growers such as the lease and market opportunities. Wm thought that with leases the land would be better taken care of because growers would feel more secure with investing in the land knowing that they would be there for an extended period of time. Pat thought that the land behind the Nielson property on S. East Street should be brought up again because it is blocking valuable farmable land that is not able to be accessed by anything except for town vehicles for maintenance purposes.

A motion was made for Ruth to make a formal request from David for an inventory of town owned open land and their restrictions. This was seconded and approved unanimously by the commission.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm

Approved at the September 8, 2009 Agricultural Commission meeting.